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tion, Prof. C. H. Van Tyne of the University of Michigan. A fitting introduction to the volume is given by the French ambassador at Washington, M. Jusserand. Mr. Perkins seems not to have made a study of original archives but to have based his work upon biographies, letters, and the published collections of original materials. The book is scholarly and interesting. As in his larger works Mr. Perkins here shows a mastery of dramatic arrangement, of clear perspective and of keen characterization that cannot be too highly commended. As far as possible in the scope of the volume, the actors tell their own story in apt quotations.

The weakness of our situation at the beginning and throughout the Revolution is shown, resulting as it did from lack of centralization, from economic mistakes, and from a patriotism largely embryonic. "Prosperity not only brings happiness but it develops virtues,"—patriotism among others. Surely the unfaltering courage of Washington must have yielded ultimately to British stupidity of those long years had not French arms, money, soldiers and ships come to our aid as they did. The story of American missions to France is well told; blundering but well-meaning Silas Deane, troublemaking Izard and Lee, pugnacious Lawrence, Jay and Adams, and the suave, politic Franklin who must truly have possessed the philosopher's stone, so successfully did he inveigle money from impoverished French coffers. "Hortalez & Co." furnish an interesting chapter, though an uncomfortable one to an American conscience. We have all been taught that France fought England because of the opportunity to pay off old scores, but we need to be reminded of the enthusiasm of the French masses for liberal ideas that influenced even a monarch like Louis XVI to champion a republican cause. Vergennes, as his foreign secretary, promised to make no peace with England till we were free, and the promise was kept faithfully. There is a charming picture of the young Lafayette—ambitious—but brave, generous and lovable. Of our other French friends it is sad to find how many of the young aristocrats who fought for us died on the scaffold as victims of the French Revolution; while most of those who gave us financial aid died impoverished. The French monarchy itself perished bankrupt a few years later after having spent 772 millions on a war from which it had gained very little. The French alliance with America was, according to Florida Blanca, prime minister of Spain, worthy of Don Quixote. "But the instincts of the French nation were right; they assisted a people to gain their freedom; they took part in one of the great crises of modern progress, they helped the world in its onward march. For nations, as for individuals, that is the greatest work."

WM. E. LINGELBACH.

*University of Pennsylvania.*

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**Plunkett, H.** *Rural Life Problem in America.* Pp. xi, 174. Price, \$1.25. New York: Macmillan Company.

Just before we get to the end of our epoch of giving away free farms, we discover that we have a rural problem. It is fortunate that we can have a Rural Problem Doctor come and prescribe for us. Speaking from successful experience, Sir Horace Plunkett has been able to give us a valuable little

book worthy of wide reading by those interested in rural economics or sociology. It is suggestive, and most emphatic in its kernel idea of the need of organization.

"Twenty years ago the pioneers of our rural life movement found it necessary to concentrate their efforts upon the reorganization of the farmer's business . . . Our message to Irish farmers was that they must imitate the methods of their Continental competitors, who were defeating them in their own markets simply by superior organization. After five years of individual propagandism, the Irish Agricultural Organization Society was formed in 1894 to meet the demand for instruction as to the formation and the working of co-operative societies, a demand to which it was beyond the means of the few pioneers to respond.

"Speaking from administrative experience at home, and from a good deal of interested observation in America, I am firmly convinced that the new rural education is badly handicapped by the lack of organized bodies of farmers to act as channels for the new knowledge now made available. . . The truth is, American farmers have had the will to organize, but they have missed the way.

"The political influence of the farming community has for this reason never been commensurate either with the numerical strength of its members or the magnitude of their share in the nation's work. . . And not only political impotence, but political inertia, result from the lack of organization."

But he thinks organization is far more important than mere political leadership and crop making. "The thousands of young men who are now being trained for advanced farming too often have to restrict the practical application of their theoretic knowledge to the home circle, which is not always responsive, for a man is not usually a prophet in his own family. It is here that the educational value of co-operative societies comes in; they act as agencies through which scientific teaching may become actual practice, not in the uncertain future, but in the living present. A co-operative association has a quality which should commend it to the social reformer—the power of evoking character; it brings to the front a new type of local leader, not the best talker, but the man whose knowledge enables him to make some solid contribution to the welfare of the community."

J. RUSSELL SMITH.

*University of Pennsylvania.*

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**Richard, E.** *History of German Civilization*. Pp. x, 545. Price, \$2.00. New York: Macmillan Company, 1911.

The field of German political history is rather barren in English. When we have mentioned Atkinson, Henderson, Bryce, Tuttle, Longman and Gardiner (omitting the translations) the list is almost complete (John Savage's *Complete History of Germany* has been out of date for two centuries and Sime hardly deserves a mention).

Histories on German Civilization are even less in number. We have indeed Franke's *Glimpses of Modern German Civilization* and the same